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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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MEMBERS OF SALISBURY AREA DRUG RING PLEAD GUILTY

Baltimore, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that Ronald Seldon, age 29, of Salisbury, Maryland, pleaded guilty today before U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz to the charges of conspiracy to distribute 5 kilograms or more of cocaine hydrochloride and 50 grams or more of cocaine base, commonly known as "crack," and money laundering. Guilty pleas were also entered today by: the defendant's mother, Yvonne Seldon, age 58, of Salisbury, Maryland; the defendant's girlfriend, Edwina Harmon, age 36, of Salisbury, Maryland; and Edwina Harmon's mother, Sylvia Harmon, age 63, of Salisbury, Maryland. The three women pleaded guilty to conspiracy to engage in monetary transactions in excess of \$10,000 derived from Seldon's drug distribution activities.

According to the Statement of Facts presented to the court, between 1996 and April 2003, Ronald Seldon conspired with numerous individuals to distribute and possess with the intent to distribute cocaine and cocaine hydrochloride, primarily in Prince George's County and counties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He obtained multiple ounce and kilogram quantities of these drugs from sources of supply in

New York, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, and used various individuals to assist him in the distribution of those drugs in Maryland. Seldon also employed a courier to transport the drugs and monies back and forth between Maryland and New York. Seldon would cook the cocaine hydrochloride that he obtained from his sources into crack cocaine for distribution in the Maryland area.

According to the Statement of Facts, during the course of the conspiracy, numerous purchases of cocaine were made from Seldon and his associates by confidential informants. These transactions were monitored and recorded by the DEA. In July 2000 and March 2003, the execution of search warrants on residences, vehicles and bank accounts associated with Seldon and the three women resulted in the seizure of: numerous guns; approximately \$143,000 in United States currency; drug paraphernalia, including tables and vehicles with hidden compartments and kilogram wrappers; jewelry valued at approximately \$130,400; and quantities of narcotics, including approximately 800 grams of cocaine base and 800 grams of cocaine hydrochloride.

According to the Statement of Facts, during the course of the conspiracy, Ronald Seldon solicited Edwina Harmon, Syvlia Harmon and Yvonne Seldon to launder his drug proceeds: through their various bank accounts; the purchase of vehicles, including two Mercedes Benz cars; and by assisting in the purchase of various Maryland properties, including one location in Baltimore and one in Salisbury. Through the course of the conspiracy, Ronald Seldon provided Edwina Harmon and Yvonne Seldon with large quantities of cash from his drug proceeds to pay for household bills, private education costs for the children of Edwina Harmon and Ronald Seldon, credit card purchases, and other expenses relating to their properties and residences. The total amount of laundered funds was in excess of \$1,000,000.

As a result of the pleas entered today, Ronald Seldon and the three women have agreed to forfeit any right, title, and interest to various automobiles, bank accounts, residences, jewelry and cash that were

utilized in furtherance of their drug and money laundering activities and purchased with drug-related proceeds.

Ronald Seldon faces a mandatory minimum of 10 years incarceration up to a maximum of life imprisonment, as well as a fine of up to \$4 million on the conspiracy charge. Seldon and the three women face a maximum sentence of 10 years incarceration and a fine of \$250,000 on the money laundering charge. The sentencing hearing for Ronald Seldon is scheduled for June 8, 2004 at 9:00 a.m.; the sentencing hearings for the three women are scheduled for June 10, 2004, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

This Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force case is a result of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration, Salisbury Post of Duty and Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division, with assistance from the Salisbury Resident Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Wicomico, Dorchester and Somerset County Narcotics Task Forces of the Maryland State Police. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Angela R. White and Christine Manuelian.